



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release:

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EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Jeffrey Morton

**LASALLE BANK BRANCH MANAGER SENTENCED
TO 24 MONTHS FOR EMBEZZLEMENT**

A 31-year-old Pontiac man who took over \$130,000 from bank accounts belonging to his elderly clients was sentenced to 24 months in federal prison, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Joining in the announcement was FBI Special Agent in Charge Daniel D. Roberts.

Jeffrey Morton, a LaSalle Bank personal banker and branch manager, pled guilty on May 8, 2006 to one felony count of bank theft. At his plea, Morton admitted that he stole \$131,552.72 from his clients, Alexander and Sheila Ritchie, who relied on Morton as their personal banker. Mr. Ritchie is 83 years old. Morton admitted that he accomplished the theft by (i) creating an ATM card in Mr. Ritchie's name; (ii) creating two unauthorized accounts; and (iii) performing over-the-counter withdrawals.

"Stealing the savings of senior citizens merits a serious prison sentence," United States Attorney Murphy said. "The defendant used his position of trust to victimize the vulnerable assets of elderly clients that he was supposed to protect."

In addition to the prison sentence, United States District Court Judge Gerald E. Rosen also ordered Morton to pay restitution of \$131,552.72. The restitution was ordered to be paid to LaSalle Bank, which had previously reimbursed the Ritchies for the employee's fraud.

U.S. Attorney Murphy thanked the FBI for there assistance in the successful investigation of the case. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leonid Feller.